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OLD FASCISM AND NEW RIGHT-WING POPULISM

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In classical fascism, an organization that was at first externally and strictly hierarchically structured for the state gained dominance over the state apparatuses through the legal assumption of power, and then merged with them in a specific way, whereby the capitalist system that had fallen into crisis could be maintained and violently secured at a new level. At the beginning of a fascisation process, the fascist party is still outside the state apparatuses, which it later wants to take over and change step by step, whereby above all the restructured repressive apparatus in the second phase of power integration can even dominate the fascist party, namely through the mechanisms of the political police, which is now to be established in its meaning before the administration and army. (Poulantzas 1973: 356)

Described by Poulantzas as a specific form of the exceptional state (other forms for him are the military dictatorship and Bonapartism), fascism leads to a reorganization of the state system and to shifts of power within its repressive, ideological and economic apparatuses, with the repressive apparatus becoming dominant, but also drastic changes taking place in the other apparatuses, for example when the political police increasingly assume ideological tasks as well. (ibid.: 342) In fascism, the legal system continues to guarantee the conditions of production and ownership, but also assumes the direct political function of control and intervention in class struggles. The law no longer reliably regulates the execution of power by the state apparatuses and the access to these apparatuses and their relations to each other; rather, there is legal arbitrariness, with which the predictability of one's own rules of transformation for the legal system itself also fails.

In the process, the war machine is implanted into the state as a performative organizational principle and then develops a suicidal tendency through a process of flight and increases in the state, during which the political police turns to the practice of terror against the population or against its resistant and oppositional parts, for which the fascist mass party must also be able to mobilize large parts of the population (do the masses want fascism?). The hysterically acting fascist mass party, which has a special function not only in the repressive state apparatuses, but also in the ideological state apparatuses, is permanently mobilizing the masses, while at the same time the sharpest form of social exclusion and stock-keeping takes place. From a certain point onwards, the annihilation of the Jews as a race to be specified and of the Bolshevik producers stood at the centre of German fascism. Propagandistically, fascism brings into play the conceptions of the national community, racism and nationalism and lets them circulate hysterically, especially in order to sensitize and strengthen the population's empathy for the destructive

potential of the state. Fascism thus marks the transition from apparent peace to open war, whereby the state also becomes part of a war machine, which it has released itself from a certain point in time. This kind of fascist war machine, which aims at the annihilation of populations, thus emerges from the state itself.

At the same time, the masses are permanently mobilized and constituted as a nation, a specific process that George Mosse described in detail in his book *Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer*. For Mosse, National Socialism is merely the borderline case of democracy, pushing to the extreme the indoctrination of homogeneous collective ideas that are always observed in democracies. (Mosse 1979: 15ff.) The sermon of power here is related to the irrationalism of a fascist mass politics, which realizes a unity of the people, which only exists on paper, and makes it tangible and experienceable, so to speak. Thus the general will of the state is presented day by day as a collective emotion. The Nazis extended the process of constructing the emotionalization of unity to an entire people and pushed it to the extreme of annihilation, which ultimately included their own suicide. Fascism translates the collective psychologies into external manifestations, monuments and sewer systems into which the masses flow and in which their utterances and desires can circulate collectively, desires that also include the violation of the prohibition, which in turn want to be shared with many and culminate in monumental representations. There is a rapid increase in media tendencies, which in certain democracies are not always the same. 1 The nation is now coagulating into the imaginary incarnation of the people, a specific national self-representation based on what is to unite the people: Language, history, homeland, blood, etc.2

Let us now turn briefly to the current situation in Germany. The right-wing alternative for Germany (AfD) broadly dominated the last Bundestag election campaign by publicly replacing the social antagonism between rich and poor with the propaganda "Germans versus foreigners," and all the major parties then more or less aligned their policies with the AfD's interjections. With an untiring warning of the AfD, the enlightened wing of the German middle class again shows one thing above all, namely that they are determined to continue as before, to move together in their small country and close both eyes to the world outside, except to perceive it as a cheap holiday paradise and to use it as a dump for their own goods. And finally, in social amnesia, to take every institution for granted and to understand everything that disturbs, even the AfD, merely as a cause of one's own mental digestive disorders. For the attribution of racism to the AfD alone conceals systemic racism and the general racism of the majority. It is now almost common knowledge that in order to control a refugee, one either has to integrate him or make him a potential criminal, then a racially despised controlled. Integration then means for the refugee, in turn, imitating the Germans. This is the idea of German education, which is still misunderstood today: to raise a monkey. And one must not forget that the right-wing populists from the AfD to the CSU have made an offer to that part of the population at the bottom of the social hierarchy that is based on explaining its social dissatisfaction with the threat to German prosperity posed by the refugees. As offended Germans, the socially weak may then also feel strong and demand that the sums of money that the state spends on controlling the refugees be restricted, since the refugees get everything and the natives get nothing and so on and so forth. In the rejection of everything foreign, the different classes and strata come together closely, the class system turns its antagonisms and the hardness of its competition all the way to the outside.

The new neo-fascist movements try to subordinate the capitalist economy to the logic of the civil war (without, however, touching the economy in any way in their rules of the game), especially when it appears today that parts of the middle classes cannot follow various neo-liberal postulates that demand an enrichment of the self, the self-responsible entrepreneur and cultural singularity due to their economic precarization. In its boom phase, the neoliberal project propagated individualism without the individual and fierce competition, and now, when the middle classes are threatened with descent, it must feed their resentments and thus also promote identity politics, xenophobia and paranoia. The conglomerate of neoliberal governance practices was initially simply adopted by the post-fascist movements in order to reconfigure a set of dispositives that intensify the civil war.

The racist phantasm, which is always part of state racism, which excludes the foreigner and monitors and regulates the lives and deaths of the population, has currently undergone a not unintentional minor modification. In accordance with the general rules of neo-liberalism, we are also observing here a development from security to risk. The racist migration discourse first presents the indigenous population as an integral, quasi-organic body, characterised by clear boundaries with the outside world and which must be defended against the hordes and nomads from the south who threaten the homogeneity of the healthy body of the people. And this includes today, with the change from the racism of race doctrines to the racism of usefulness considerations and in the expansion from security to risk dispositive, the strict distinction between desired and qualified foreign professionals, who are lacking in some sectors in Germany, and the unwanted refugee who represents the mass of useless people from the global South.

It is not the dynamics of bio-power that determine racism, but racism insists on the need to intensify class division within the population. The population cannot reproduce without being divided, with which it is differentiated from the outset from a biopolitical point of view by the strategies of capital, whose class struggle thus already has a racist component.

The biopolitical concept of these post-fascisms consists in the direct implantation of the postulate of "racial warfare" into class conflicts. It is therefore not surprising that the important operations of right-wing populist and neo-fascist policies, which move in the real milieu of the war of and against the populations, determine as their enemies above all the deeply colonized parts of the population such as migrants, refugees and Muslims. The subjects resisting in this context, who are political per se today, since they are quasi integrated as a homogeneous group into the global world market, where they have been totally expropriated and disenfranchised, and thus express the truth of today's economic and political world situation, are the migrants and refugees, who

mostly risk their (naked) lives during their flight.³

Thus the cross-border free flow of goods, services and capital fundamentally takes precedence over the mobility of people, whereby highly qualified foreign workers from the South are certainly also to be integrated into the economies of the metropolises, but only the owners and managers of large capital as well as the political and cultural elites are guaranteed relatively free mobility around the globe. A large part of humanity today is simply stuck in more or less warehouse-like conditions and dwellings.

One has to let it melt on one's tongue once again, assets amounting to around 40 trillion US dollars disappeared into thin air at the global level after the financial crisis of 2008, and in the USA alone 14 trillion US dollars of private household assets disappeared into thin air. Long before this, the US dollar-denominated money capital and financial flows, which had grown steadily since the 1970s due in part to the US trade deficit, had been disintegrating from global trade volumes. Since the 2000s, the major European banks in particular had bought gigantic sums of securities and derivatives quoted in US dollars, some of which, as the crisis then revealed, were toxic, so that a gigantic shortfall in the dollar financing of European banks arose. When the market collapsed in 2008, for example, the receivables of German banks on Wall Street amounted to more than 1,000 billion US dollars. So US derivatives had been bought on a large scale with dollars borrowed from Wall Street, which were now reclaimed from Wall Street. Panic broke out among the banks, and governments had to pump trillions into the financial system and partially nationalize banks, insurance companies and other companies. This burdened the budgets of the US and the states in Europe so heavily that a tightened austerity policy was the logical consequence, with governments transferring the losses of capital and the financial system to the wage-earning workers and employees, parts of the indebted middle class, the unemployed and the totally dependent. In Europe, the countries were incited against each other, i.e. the crisis problem emanating from financial capital was reinterpreted as a conflict between labour-shy southern countries and hard-working northern Europeans. It was also the allegedly bloated welfare state in Germany, Italy or Greece, too high wages, too rigid labour markets or even the trade unions that were responsible for the crisis. In addition, since state bailouts are unpopular with large sections of the population, financial crises are often associated with moral failure not only of bankers but also of politicians, and the relationship between creditor and debtor can easily be personified. All this strengthens right-wing movements. It is easy to see that in the US and Europe ideological set pieces composed of nationalism, racism and neoliberal waste have gained weight and momentum after the financial crisis. The right-wing populist movements only had to follow up on this kind of "discourse" in order to inspire parts of the population with their paranoia stagings and eradication fantasies, especially in the social networks, and then finally become active themselves and attack the refugees' camp shelters with incendiary devices and steel balls. The national preferences that are being staged today, such as the Brexit, cannot become part of the smooth functioning of the state's policy without constantly increasing fear of migrants, refugee is constructed, disseminated and mobilised, thus serving to control the mobility of those populations who have to migrate from the south of the globe in order to survive at all. The contrast between the complete freedoms of flows of goods, money and capital on the one hand and the lack of mobility of large parts of the world's population on the other must be satisfied by specific forms of regulation materialized by the state apparatuses and ideologically processed by the populist neo-fascist movements.

When, in 2008, the management of the financial crisis in the capitalist core countries, which consisted in particular in Europe in transferring the debts of private banks to the taxpayers, was accepted by the public,⁴ it was clear that both the transnational war machine of capital and the states had to set in motion a new wave of internal and external colonization of certain population groups. The dismantling of the welfare state and the stagnation of real wages meant that private households were further integrated into the debt economy and had to "speculate" on their incomes financially.⁶ And debts must be understood as apparatuses of power, which particularly also affect women, blacks and poor people. Racist policies, especially institutionalized racisms, have been part of austerity policies from the beginning. After the 2008 crisis, racism and nationalism were finally raised to the level of state power.

¹ Deleuze and Guattari have sharply criticized democracy in all its forms and constellations, calling it the cousin of totalitarianism.

² The state can universalize the categories of perception within the boundaries of its territory by constituting a population whose members possess the same categories of perception after having undergone and suffered specific conditioning and inoculation of procedures called education. This applies in particular to the construction of the citizen: in the liberal view of the state, the citizen is anyone who is recognized as such by a constitution; he or she does not have to bring with him or her any special qualities, such as those associated with blood or origin, as later adopted by ethnic racism. The state establishes the citizen as a formally free and equal subject, identical to his atomization, and at the same time represents the unity divided into formally equal monads. This is how its political sovereignty manifests itself. Fascism, on the other hand, places the nation before the citizen in order to ultimately liquidate him. The national character, which is by no means the same as citizenship, but which in Germany is repeatedly mixed with citizenship in order to ultimately even favour the nation over the general citizen, is the result of certain disciplinings and inoculation procedures, all of which amount to a sublimated racism.

In contrast to the national character, the citizen is a purely juridical entity that exists insofar as the citizen is placed in a relationship of rights and duties to the state, whereas in German conservative political theory the nation is regarded as an ethnocultural entity that, although legally defined and territorializable by the state, is nevertheless clearly distinguished from citizenship. Ultimately, however, it is the capitalist state that produces the nation with its constitutive elements (unified economic

market, territory, and language) by specifically intervening in the material matrices of space and time that are to become part of the capitalist economy and the relations of production.

3The proletariat is already an objectively migrant proletariat, for at any moment the worker in the wage labor relationship can be dismissed in order to have to settle elsewhere according to the requirements of capital accumulation. This mobility of the proletariat, even if it remains spatially limited, is a condition of modern industry. And without the migration of the global proletariat to new markets, from country to city, from city to city, from country to country, capitalist accumulation is not possible. As the most deterritorialized part of the proletariat today, the global Surplus population, although spatially constituted, has the greatest potential for revolutionary transformation. This is because, in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari, it functions as a minority that is nothing more than a proletarianized mass, but as a mass it is immediately confronted with the institutional, police and legal structures of the nation-states. At the same time, it is imperative to put a stop to the Schmittian construction of migration policies: For him, nomadism is always only a temporary phenomenon of migration, so that it must inevitably become the source of a new territorial order that takes place between imperialisms or states; it finds its historical destiny in becoming part of these formations, and if certain conditions are denied by it, acts of violence quickly occur that destroy them.

4The state interventions to save the financial system extended to lending to and recapitalizing private banks, the purchase of bank assets and state guarantees for bank deposits or even bank balance sheets. In total, more than seven trillion dollars have been made available by participating institutions, central banks, banking supervisors and finance ministries. The intensity of these measures for the respective economies depended on the degree to which a country was linked to global financial capital, the amount of public money available, executive policies, and the power of local corporations and banks. In the United States, the US Treasury's bailouts have placed less of a burden on taxpayers than in Europe.

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